

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CARACA 01354 051604Z

62

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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R 042100Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7539

S E C R E T CARACAS 1354

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, APER (SHLAUDEMAN, HARRY W)

SUBJECT: VIEWS OF VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT OVER ARRIVAL OF NEXT
AMERICAN AMBASSADOR

1. DURING A LENGTHY INTERVIEW AS REPORTED ELSEWHERE, PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ ALLUDED NO LESS THAN THREE SEPARATE TIMES TO THE APPOINTMENT OF AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE SHLAUDEMAN. AT FIRST HE TOOK USUAL LINE THAT OF COURSE HE WOULD ACCEPT ANY NOMINEE OF THE U.S. PRESIDENT AND THAT HE WAS WELL AWARE THAT AMBASSADORS WERE MERELY THE MOUTHPIECES OF THEIR GOVERNMENT AND THEREFORE COULD NOT BE CONSIDERED PERSONA GRATA OR NON GRATA UNLESS SOME GRIEVOUS MISTAKE AFTER ARRIVAL AT POST. HE HAD THEREFORE GLADLY GRANTED THE "PLACET" TO SHLAUDEMAN. HOWEVER, HE COULD NOT IGNORE THE FACT THAT THE SHLAUDEMAN APPOINTMENT HAD ATTRACTED WIDESPREAD AND UNFAVORABLE PUBLIC INTEREST IN VENEZUELA AND ELSEWHERE, FANNED BY AN IRRESPONSIBLE PRESS. HE HOPED THEREFORE THAT A CONSIDERABLE PERIOD OF TIME MIGHT LAPSE BEFORE SHLAUDEMAN'S ARRIVAL AND SEEMED TO AGREE TO MY SUGGESTION THAT PERHAPS THE BEST THING AFTER SHLAUDEMAN'S APPOINTMENT HAD BEEN CONFIRMED WOULD BE FOR A PERIOD OF SOME WEEKS TO ELAPSE DURING WHICH THE EMBASSY WOULD IN THE HANDS OF A CHARGE D'AFFAIRES WHO, I INFORMED HIM, WAS TOTALLY UNKNOWN IN VENEZUELA, AND UNTIL AFTER THE VISIT OF SECRETARY KISSINGER. THE PRESIDENT WAS VERY CLEAR IN HIS OPINION THAT FOR SHLAUDEMAN'S PRESENCE TO COINCIDE WITH THAT OF THE SECRETARY WOULD BE PERILOUS. MCCLINTOCK

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

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